



Department of the Interior Recovery Investments *Investing in America's Economic Recovery*



Sky Islands and Desert Seas Restoration, Phase II: Habitat Protection and Protection of Mexican Free-tailed Bats

Need

The Eagle Creek Bat Cave was once the largest known bat colony in the U.S. (25 million in 1963) and a critical maternity roost for Mexican free-tailed bats. Bat numbers in the cave have dwindled - from millions to thousands - due to human disturbance, particularly a human-caused guano fire. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will construct a bat-friendly gate to reduce human disturbance and allow this unique resource to recover. Work on this project is expected to take place between 2009 and 2011, but onsite construction will be limited to October through February to reduce impacts to the bats in the cave and bighorn sheep during lambing season.

Add overview map showing state, capital, field office, and project location. (use alt tag for web)

Recovery Act Funding

Information about the funding allocated for this BLM-Arizona American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project will be released after the contract has been awarded.

Benefits

When the colony was healthy, bats from Eagle Creek Bat Cave were credited with providing around a million dollars worth of crop protection to the Gila Valley through their nightly insect control. Protection of the cave through a new gate would allow the colony to gradually recover in number. The Eagle Creek Bat Cave is a BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Partners in this cooperative project include Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold, Bat Conservation International, and Wildlife Habitat Partnership. Arizona caving and bat conservation specialists also support protection of the cave.



More Information

For more information about this BLM ARRA project, contact Lance Brady, Assistant Field Manager for Renewable Resources, at 928-348-4426 or Lance_R_Brady@blm.gov; or the BLM-Arizona ARRA Coordinator, at 602-417-9641.